

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-19

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 ACDE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 IO-14

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USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

USNMR SHAPE PRIORITY

USCINCEUR PRIORITY

S E C R E T VIENNA 2653

MOSCOW PLEASE PASS TO HELMUT SONNENFELDT

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: INFORMAL SESSION WITH EASTERN

REPS MARCH 25, 1974

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IN FIVE-HOUR INFORMAL SESSION
MARCH 25, ALLIES WERE REPRESENTED BY CANADIAN REP,
FRG REP AND USREP AND EAST BY SOVIET REPS KHLESTOV
AND SMIRNOVSKY, CZECHOSLOVAK REP KLEIN AND GDR REP
OESER. DISCUSSION FOCUSED ON SUMMARY OF POSITIONS
OF BOTH SIDES, PLUS A DISCUSSION OF STABILIZING MEASURES.
KHLESTOV STRIPPED BACK EASTERN EYMBOLIC PROPOSAL STILL
FURTHER. IN THIS CONTEXT, HE MENTIONED NUCLEAR AND AIR FORCES

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ALMOST AS AN AFTERTHOUGHT. HE REPLACED IDEA OF SMALL NUCLEAR

AND AIR REDUCTIONS WITH THAT OF A FREEZE, AND ALSO STATED THAT FORM AND TIMING OF WESTERN EUROPEAN REDUCTIONS COULD BE DISCUSSED FURTHER. IT WAS NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR WHETHER THE LAST POINT WAS INTENDED TO INDICATE WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT POSTPONEMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN REDUCTIONS.

2. AS AGREED BY AD HOC GROUP, ALLIED REPS STRESSED COMMON ELEMENTS WHICH HAD EMERGED IN PROGRAM OF BOTH SIDES AS REGARDS US-SOVIET REDUCTIONS, DESCRIBED BENEFITS OF STABILIZING MEASURES FOR BOTH SALES; AND PRESENTED IN CLEAR FORM REASONS WHY THE EASTERN SYMBOLIC REDUCTION PROPOSAL WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO WEST. IN HIS REMARKS, KHLESTOV CLAIMED WEST WAS INFLATING ITS TOTAL OF WARSAW PACT GROUND FORCES THROUGH INCLUDING IN THIS TOTAL EASTERN AIR DEFENSE FORCES, A CATEGORY OMITTED FROM CALCULATIONS OF SOME WESTERN GROUND FORCES. HE PROPOSED THAT SINCE BOTH SIDES DIFFERED AS TO WHAT TYPE OF UNITS, THEY CONSIDERED TO FALL UNDER THE HEADING OF GROUND FORCES, THIS ISSUE SHOULD BE EXAMINED IN A FUTURE INFORMAL SESSION. KHLESTOV ALSO ARGUED THAT A LARGE PROPORTION OF THE 300,000 CIVILIAN PERSONNEL WEST HAD WORKING FOR ITS ARMED FORCES IN THE AREA OF REDUCTIONS PERFORMED DIRECTLY MILITARY FUNCTIONS AND SHOULD BE THEREFORE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN COMPUTING TOTALS ON BOTH SIDES.

3. KHLESTOV DID NOT ADVANCE PROCEDURAL OBJECTIONS AGAINST DISCUSSION OF STABILIZING MEASURES. HIS MAIN ARGUMENT WAS THAT ALTHOUGH EAST DID NOT LIKE THE WESTERN PROPOSALS, THEY WOULD ONLY BE LOGICAL IF APPLIED TO THOSE FORCES WHICH WERE NOT REDUCED ON THE WESTERN SIDE UNDER THE WESTERN PHASE I PROPOOSAL, THAT IS, TO THE WESTERN EUROPEAN FORCES, RATHER THAN TO THE FORCES REDUCED. HE SAID THE EASTERN APPROACH AS SET FORTH IN DRAFT AGREEMENT OF NOVEMBER 8 DID NOT ENVISAGE EXCEPTIONS FROM AGREED CEILINGS FOR THE PURPOSE OF ROTATION OR EXERCISES, BUT IF THE WEST WISHED TO DISCUSS THIS POSSIBILITY FURTHER, THAT COULD BE DONE AT A LATER POINT, FOLLOWING DISCUSSION OF REDUCTIONS. SMIRNOVSKY ASKED
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WHETHER, IF THE STABILIZING MEASURES WERE ADOPTED, WEST WOULD TAKE SOME OF ITS NUCLEAR FORCES OFF QUICK REACTION ALERT.

4. IN HIS SUMMARY OF THE COURSE OF THE SIX PRECEEDING SESSIONS, KHLESTOV RETURNED TO THE EASTERN SYMBOLIC REDUCTION PROPOSAL, PLACING EXTREME EMPHASIS ON THE NEED FOR EUROPEANS TO REDUCE FROM THE OUTSET, AND MAKING

POINTS ON TIMING AND NUCLEAR-AIR FREEZE NOTED ABOVE.
US REP ASKED WHETHER REMARKS BY KHLESTOV
THAT THE FORM AND TIMING OF EUROPEAN REDUCTIONS UNDER THE
EASTERN SYMBOLIC PROPOSAL MIGHT BE DISCUSSED FURTHER DID
NOT IN PRACTICE MEAN THAT THE EAST WOULD BE SATISFIED
WITH A COMMITMENT BY OTHER DIRECT PARTICIPANTS TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE REDUCTION PROCESS RATHER THAN ACTUAL REDUCTIONS
FROM THE OUTSET. EASTERN PARTICIPANTS THEREUPON REQUESTED
PERMISSION TO CAUCUS. AFTER THEY RETURNED, KHLESTOV STATED
THAT HE HAD BEEN MISUNDERSTOOD AND HAD REFERRED ONLY TO
EASTERN IDEA THAT QUESTION OF WHEN IN 1975 SYMBOLIC REDUCTIONS
SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED WAS OPEN FOR DISCUSSION.

KHLESTOV EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE IRRITATION
OVER PRESENTATION BY FRG REP ON LINES AGREED BY AD HOC
GROUP STATING THAT ALLIED REASONS FOR REJECTING SYMBOLIC
APPROACH WERE CONCLUSIVE ONES. HE THEN SUGGESTED THAT
PARTICIPANTS SHOULD EXAMINE THE TWO IDEAS OF US-SOVIET
GROUND FORCE REDUCTIONS AND OF A SYMBOLIC REDUCTION
TOGETHER TO SEE IF ANY COMPROMISE COULD BE FOUND.

5. IT WAS AGREED TO MEET FOR A FURTHER SESSION ON
APRIL 1, WITH A POSSIBLE SECOND SESSION AT THE END OF
THAT WEEK.

6. BEGIN COMMENT: WHILE IT SHOULD NOT BE OVERVALUED,
THE DISCUSSION BROUGHT A NUMBER OF POSSIBLE INDICATIONS,
AS YET INCONCLUSIVE, OF POSSIBLE MOVEMENT IN THE
EASTERN POSITION. THESE INCLUDE: (A) MORE BUSINESSLIKE
APPROACH TO DATE; AND PROPOSAL TO DEFINE WHAT FORCES
SHOULD BE INCLUDED UNDER THE CONCEPT OF GROUND FORCES;
(B) KHLESTOV'S COMMENT THAT HIS SEPARATE SYMBOLIC
AGREEMENT INVOLVED PHASING AND WAS THEREFORE, IN THIS
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SENSE, A COMMON ELEMENT; (C) HIS FURTHER CUTTING BACK
OF THE EASTERN SYMBOLIC PROPOSAL, INCLUDING THE IDEAS
THAT NUCLEAR AND AIR FORCES MERELY BE FROZEN AND
THAT CONSIDERATION COULD BE GIVEN TO TIMING OF WESTERN
EUROPEAN REDUCTIONS; AND (D) THAT EQUAL CONSIDERATION
SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE IDEA OF US-SOVIET GROUND FORCE
REDUCTIONS AND THE SYMBOLIC REDUCTION PROPOSAL. END
COMMENT. END SUMMARY.

REMAINER OF INFORMAL SESSION REPORT FOLLOWS SEPTTEL.HUMES

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